



Government of South Australia

Department of Education and  
Children's Services



Office of the Chief Executive  
Education Centre  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
31 Flinders Street  
Adelaide SA 5000  
GPO Box 1152  
Adelaide SA 5001  
DX 541  
Tel 08 8226 1205

CE 2006/02369

Dr Ian Holland  
Secretary to the Senate Environment, Communications,  
Information Technology and The Arts Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

I refer to your letter of 3 August 2006 regarding the Senate Inquiry into women in sport and recreation in Australia and the advice you have sought about the approach taken in South Australia to the specific areas highlighted in your letter.

I am able to provide the following information.

**1 What physical education classes are required and what are available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?**

From the beginning of 2002 educators in Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) schools are required to plan and implement teaching and learning programs and assess learners' achievement using the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework.

The SACSA Framework describes Key Ideas and Learning Outcomes from birth to Year 12. Key Ideas and Learning Outcomes comprise the required elements of the curriculum framework for all South Australian government schools and children's services. These core elements provide the basis for educators to design detailed learning and assessment programs that suit the needs of children and students in their settings and that emphasise local priorities. Through the Moving Forward with SACSA strategy government schools are required to provide Curriculum Standards data in selected learning areas to the department's central office in 2007.

Within the Health and Physical Education Learning Area, one strand entitled "Physical Activity and Participation" has two key ideas; physical activity, and movement skills and strategies for participating in games and sport. Teachers are required to plan a comprehensive learning program within the curriculum frameworks and to select appropriate opportunities for learning based on the needs of the students and their local community.

The Learning Outcomes described in "Health and Physical Education" require students to learn through participation in physical activity and make appropriate life choices based on their knowledge, skills and understandings.

Schools are responsible for the achievement of student learning outcomes across the curriculum for any area of learning. Since 2005 the department has been a signatory to an "Australian Government Funding for Schools 2005-08" agreement that includes a commitment to provide at least 2 hours of physical activity in the curriculum of each government school in each school week for students undertaking primary or junior secondary education. The department is moving towards compliance with this requirement.

It should also be noted that in 2006 all students R-12 have the opportunity to access a comprehensive swimming, aquatics, water and surf safety program as part of the health and physical education learning area.

**2 What proportion of physical education classes are required to involve physical activity?**

Learning in the Physical Activity and Participation strand of the "Health and Physical Education" learning area develops movement skills through active involvement in play, games, sport, dance, gymnastics, aquatics and outdoor activities in a variety of contexts, alone, with others and in teams. No proportion of physical activity time is mandated in physical education classes in South Australian schools. In South Australia this is a professional judgement determined by educators and based on the needs of learners and the local community's expectations.

**3 What school sport during regular school hours is required, and what is available (but non-compulsory), in each year of school?**

If school sport is defined as the sporting competition program and associated training then there is no policy requiring either the conduct or participation of students in such a program. School communities determine what activities are organised and conducted or accessed through community options.

Primary and secondary schools access a sporting program through the primary and secondary school sport organising groups (the South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association – SAPSASA and Secondary School Sport SA).

This program is mainly conducted in school time but elements may occur after school and includes zone or district competitions, knock-out events, carnivals and state championships and state teams. Students choose to participate.

While sporting activities are available in different forms for students from Reception, the more formal sporting competition program conducted by community sporting bodies is offered from Year 2 onwards. SAPSASA offer their sporting program for students in Year 5 and above.

**4 What other obligations are there to participate in school organised sporting activity outside regular school hours?**

Schools encourage and facilitate student participation in community sport or organise school teams that enter programs organised by school or community sporting bodies. Students choose to participate.

The variation between schools would be significant given the expertise and enthusiasm of school staff and/or parent volunteers and the availability of accessible competitions.

**5 In each of the above cases, what is included in the meaning of sport, physical activity or exercise?**

Sport relates to activities with a clear set of rules involving physical activity and skills. Sporting activities can occur in schools as part of a health and physical education program, informally at lunch time or before and after school, or as part of a sporting competition program.

School sport is defined as the sport competition program. Other formal sporting activity would be seen as part of the school health and physical education program.

**6 In each of the above cases, who determines whether schools and students are complying with the relevant policy?**

The achievement of student learning outcomes regarding physical education is a required element of the SACSA Framework. The department's district directors have line management responsibility with the school leadership for compliance with the framework.

Sport policy relates to the appropriate nature of the activities provided to students at the various age or year levels. There is no systemic policy that requires participation.

**7 Does the regulation of any of the above matters vary according to the type of school (for examples public, Catholic or other private)?**

Schools within the Catholic Education sector use the SACSA Framework while each school within the Association of Independent Schools sector determines the scope of teaching and learning and may choose to use the framework or other curriculum materials of their choice.

Both the Catholic and other non-government school sectors access school sport programs organised and conducted by the department's school sport bodies and may also organise their own sporting program.

Non-government schools may have different expectations regarding both the participation of their students and/or the involvement of their staff as coaches/supervisors.

The department's commitment to the Physical Activity Strategy for South Australia has been represented through the *be active – Let's Go* program (2003-2006).

Under this scheme a whole of school approach supports schools to increase regular participation in physical activity for children and young people.

The aims of *be active - Let's go* are:

- increased regular participation in physical activity
- improved quality of physical activity programs for children and students
- improved student attitudes towards physical activity
- improved capacity and commitment to the provision of physical activity by site and school communities.

Between 2003-2006 \$3 million per annum has been distributed to departmental schools on a per capita basis to assist in their achievement of the four outcomes of *be active – Let's go*. Funding is provided at the following rates:

- Reception – Year 7: \$22.34 per student
- Years 8 – 12: \$7.88 per student.

A renewed funding and accountability process has been utilised in 2006.

In 2007, DECS will implement the Premier's *be active* Challenge based on the success of the Premier's Reading Challenge, in which more than 120,000 students participated last year. The Premier's *be active* Challenge aligns with key strategic initiatives and targets of South Australia's Strategic Plan, specifically target 2.6 regarding healthy weight and target 2.7 regarding physical activity. It will utilise the National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children and Young People by setting a target of a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

I trust this information is of use to your committee.

Yours sincerely



Chris Robinson  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Date: 16/10/00